

SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 13 JANUARY
2019

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday in Afrikaans as well as English at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively on HF as well as on various VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. The bulletin is relayed on Echolink by ZS6JPL. A podcast is available on the League website. Audio and text bulletins may be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za where you can also sign up to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

We start the bulletin this morning with news of a silent key.

It is with deep regret that we announce that the key of Mary Harding, ZS6AKR went silent on Monday 7 January. Mary was a member of the Ekuhuruleni Amateur Radio Society (EARS) and an Honorary Life Member of Kempton Park Amateur Radio Society (KARTS)

We extend our sincere condolences to her family and friends.

PAUSE

In the news, today:

THE SPACE SYMPOSIUM PAPER PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS CLOSE ON
TUESDAY

THE VHF/UHF WORKSHOP TO BOOST ACTIVITY ABOVE 30 MHz

and

SMARTPHONE APP USES AR TO VISUALIZE THE RF SPECTRUM

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

THE SPACE SYMPOSIUM PAPER PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS CLOSE ON
TUESDAY

Some interesting subjects will be presented at the 2019 AMSAT SA Space Symposium on Saturday 16 March 2019 in Gauteng. Added to the agenda this past week is: Application of Artificial Intelligence to identify radio signals. The final closing date for proposals for papers to be presented is Tuesday 15 January 2019.

Book now for the 2019 AMSATSA Space Symposium. It will be held at the Accolade Conference Centre in Midrand just off the Ben Schoeman Highway. The rate will be R400 per person for AMSAT SA and SARL members and R600 for non-members. There is an early bird rate of R350 for AMSATSA

and SARL Members if booked and paid for by 28 February 2019. Accommodation is also available at the hotel at R855 plus VAT. Get more details on www.amsatsa.org.za

IARUMS REPORTS ON OTH RADAR ON 21 MHZ

The IARU Region 1 Monitoring System reports that an Over the Horizon (OTH) radar located on the island of Cyprus has been active on 21,170 MHz. The Sovereign Base Area of Akrotiri and Dhekelia is a British Overseas Territory on the island of Cyprus. On 11 December, a radar on the island was reported as using FMCW, 50 sweeps/sec, 20 kHz wide on 21 170 kHz inside the amateur band.

The International Amateur Radio Union Monitoring System (IARUMS) Region 1 December 2018 newsletter can be read at www.sarl.org.za/public/monitor/monitor.asp

THE VHF/UHF WORKSHOP TO BOOST ACTIVITY ABOVE 30 MHz

The SARL/AMSAT SA VHF/UHF workshop will be held at the SARL National Amateur Radio Centre on Saturday 9 February. Some of the discussions and presentations include: the cost of a decibel on two metres; VHF and UHF propagation forecasting; a discussion of the various modes of VHF/UHF propagation, and methods that can be deployed to predict the likelihood of such conditions. If a long-distance VHF/UHF contact is made, what were the prevailing conditions, and the use of this information in building a better forecasting system; developing a reverse beacon network - the Reverse Beacon Network has evolved to become a powerful tool with many Amateur Radio applications, mostly on the HF bands. The RBN concept also provides unique opportunities for real time propagation awareness on VHF and UHF. This presentation looks at how beacons and spot VHF/UHF calling frequencies can be monitored from different sites, how to generate alerts when an opening occurs, an update on currently operating beacons, and a planned 2 m beacon mid-way between Gauteng and the Western Cape.

The workshop will end with an open discussion on: could multiple AMSATSA dual band Yagis be used to monitor beacons from various areas at the same time to provide a real time opening report; how to get clubs more involved in promoting VHF/UHF activity; will regular short burst competitions promote more activity; and a propagation alert message system using Telegram. For details follow the link on the SARL home page at www.sarl.org.za. If you interested in VHF this is a must-attend event. If you have not really operated on VHF and UHF other than the repeater then this is an even greater must-attend event

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

SMARTPHONE APP USES AR TO VISUALIZE THE RF SPECTRUM

Have you ever wished you could see in the RF part of the radio spectrum? While such a skill would probably make it hard to get a good night's rest, it would at

least allow you to instantly see dead spots in your home's Wi-Fi coverage. Not a bad trade-off.

Unwilling to go full-out to be able to visualize RF, Ken Kawamoto built the next best thing – an augmented-reality RF signal strength app for his smartphone. Built to aid in the repositioning of his router in the post-holiday clean-up, the app uses the Android ARCore framework to figure out where in the house the phone is and overlays a color-coded sphere representing sensor data onto the current camera image. The spheres persist in 3D space, leaving a trail of virtual breadcrumbs that map out the sensor data as you walk in the house. The app also lets you map Bluetooth and LTE coverage, but RF is not its only input: if your phone is properly equipped, magnetic fields and barometric pressure can also be AR mapped.

The app is called AR Sensor and is available on the Play Store, but you will need at least Android 8.0 to play. If your phone is behind the times like ours, you might have to settle for mapping your RF world the hard way.

BEACON ON 2 200 M

The Caboolture Radio Club in Australia reports the start of operation of a new beacon on the 2 200 m band. The ACMA has granted permission for continuous operation of a beacon on 137.444 kHz using the call sign VK4RBC in grid QG62LW, using WSPR2 plus a CW identifier. The power is 1 W EIRP into a 500 m long wire at 40 m maximum height. (Radcom, RSGB)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS

The SARL has received membership applications from Donald Candy, ZSL-1194; JP du Plessis, ZSL-1195; Peter Fenwick ZSL-1196; Colbrin Sieberhagen, ZS1SC; Willie Jordaan, ZR6WCC and Ben Meyer, ZS6OZ. Any objections to these membership applications must reach the League Secretary before the Wednesday following the bulletin. Please send your objections to secretary@sarl.org.za

Finally, a Diary of some upcoming events:

15 January the final date for proposals for papers for the AMSAT SA Space Symposium. 18 to 20 January the PEARS National VHF/UHF Contest. 26 January the Summer QRP Contest. 31 January the closing date for Council nominations, motions for the 2019 AGM, and nominations for the SARL Awards and Trophies. 2 February the SARL VHF/UHF QSO Party. 3 February the AWA CW Activity Day. 9 February the VHF/UHF Workshop at the NARC. 9 and 10 February the SARL National Field Day. 28 February end of early bird bookings for the Space Symposium and closing date for SARL Hall of Fame nominations.

To conclude our bulletin a quick overview of our main news item:

Some interesting subjects will be presented at the 2019 AMSAT SA Space Symposium on Saturday 16 March 2019 in Gauteng. Added to the agenda this past week is: Application of Artificial Intelligence to identify radio signals. The final

closing date for proposals for papers to be presented is Tuesday 15 January 2019.

This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

Clubs and individuals are invited to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, if possible, in both English and Afrikaans, by following the news inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items for inclusion in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly amateur radio program, 'Amateur Radio Today' at 10:00 Central African Time. The program can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower side-band and on 7 205 kHz and 17 760 kHz AM. There is also a podcast available from Dick Stratford, ZS6RO. A rebroadcast can be heard on Monday evenings at 18:30 Central African Time on 4 895 kHz AM.

We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the radio transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Dave Reece, ZS1DFR and read by

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.

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